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"Immediately, then, Philip; think upon the ruin that may come—nay, that must come, if you neglect this matter; your wife, too—your family reduced from comfort to starvation—your home desolate—"

"Aye, my lady! don't be after breaking my heart intirely; thank God, I have seven as fine flahulagh children as ever peeled pratle, and all under twelve years old; and sure I'd lay down my life ten times over for every one of them; and to-morrow for sartin—no—to-morrow, the hurling; I can't to-morrow; but the day after, if I'm a living man, I'll see about it."

Poor Philip! his kindly feelings were valueless because of his unfortunate habit. Would that this were the only example I could produce of the ill-effects of that dangerous little sentence, "*I'll see about it!*" Oh! that the sons and daughters of the fairest island that ever heaved its green bosom above the surface of the ocean would arise and be doing what is to be done, and never again rest contented with "*SEEING ABOUT IT!*"

NATIONAL EMBLEMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

SIR,—As your able correspondent, Terence O'Toole, has not as yet described that part of your emblematic engraving relating to Irish armour, I think a few extracts from works of Irish antiquarian research on that subject, may not in the mean time be mal apropos. As I see a cuirass in your frontispiece, I shall begin with Mr. Walker's observations on the ancient defensive armour of this country: he says, "It would seem that body armour of any kind was unknown to the Irish previous to the tenth century, as we find king Murkertach in that century obtaining the acitions name of Murkertach na Geochall Crocanum, for so obvious an invention as the leathern jacket;" and although poets of the middle ages describe the heroes of Oisín as shining in polished steel, no relic of that sort of armour has escaped the wreck of time in Ireland; and yet it is rather curious that coats of mail are mentioned in the Brehon laws, as the word mail is supposed to be derived from the Irish *Mala*. It is quite certain, however, that on the first invasion of the English, no sort of defensive armour, except the shield, or target, formed part of the paraphernalia of an Irish warrior. If they had been placed on any sort of an equality with their invaders, I flatter myself my countrymen would have kept their enemies longer at bay than, from their comparatively defenceless state, they were enabled to do. Smyth tells us, "That corslets of pure gold were found on the lands of Clontias in the county of Kerry;" but these were probably left there by the Spaniards, who had "a fortification called Fort del Oré, adjoining those lands." The shield of the ancient Irish was generally formed of wicker-work, but in many of the old poems we find the chiefs furnished not only with shields of burnished steel, but even those embossed with gold; and in the old poem of the Chase, the son of Morni is represented with a golden one; but whether or not these were taken from a foreign enemy, cannot now be determined.

It appears from some coins dug up in the Queen's County, in 1786, that helmets must have been in use previous to the tenth century, but how long, must also be a matter of conjecture. Mr. Walker mentions a golden helmet dug up in the county Tipperary; he describes it as resembling in form, a huntsman's cap (like the one in the engraving,*) with the leaf in front, divided equally and elevated, and the skull encompassed with a ribbon of gold crimped. (N.B. some of these relics of *old ancient times* might be useful in Dennybrook Fair in more cases than one now.) They are sometimes mentioned by the poet as studded with precious stones; but these are supposed to have been taken from foreigners. Some of their swords, however, of native manufacture are well known to have had hilts of gold, very richly ornamented with jewels. The hilts of these are of a variety of shapes, the cross hilts, however, prevail.

The battle-axe, was a very favourite weapon with the Irish. Cambrensis describes the manner of using it, he says, "they make use of but one hand when they strike, and extend the thumb along the handle, to guide the blow, from which neither the crested helmet can defend the head, or the iron folds of the armour, the body: whence it has happened sometimes that the whole thigh of a soldier, though cased in well tem-

pered steel, hath been lopped off at a single blow of the axe.' The spear was also a weapon in very general use, and Stanishurst, in his description of their manner of using them, says, "They grasp about the middle, heavy spears, which they do not hold pendant at their sides under their arms, but hurl them with all their strength over their heads;" and we may form some idea of the prodigious force which either custom or physical force enabled them to throw it, when Harris, in his *Hibernica*, mentions, "That no haubergeon, or coat of mail, was proof against their force, but were pierced through on both sides."

If Terence O'Toole does not give you any further information, I will return to the charge.

THE GHOST OF BRIAN BOROHME.

THE POTEEN.

Ireland has long been famous, or, as the Temperance Society men would say, *infamous*, for her love of the bottle. Now, without declaring ourselves on the side of the *abstinent* folks—without saying that we ought never to take a drop, and without binding ourselves never to be hearty over a tumbler of whiskey punch—we may venture to say, that it would be decidedly better for Ireland, in the long run, if she never had a distillery in the island. We say this on looking at the mischief which ardent spirits have always created in our isle. The misery, the degradation, the fightings, and even the murders, which it has been the fatal origin of, may well justify such a wish—if our countrymen could be brought just to take it *temperately*. A great alteration for the better has already taken place in this respect; and we sincerely trust that the improvement will be progressive. We extract the following account of a visit to a *Poteen Distiller* from "*Sketches in Ireland*," published by Curry and Co. of Dublin, and printed in 1827.

"One morning in July, as I was dressing myself to walk out before breakfast, I heard a noise at my back door; and observed one of my people remonstrating with a man who was anxiously pressing into the house. I went down and met the man whose demi-genteel dress and peculiar cut marked him to be a guager. 'O! for mercy's sake,' cried the man when he saw me, 'let me into your house; lock me up somewhere; hide me, save me, or my life is lost.' So I brought him in, begged of him to sit down, and offering him some refreshment, requested him to recover his courage, and come to himself, for there was no danger. While I was speaking, an immense crowd came up to the house, and surrounded it; and one man more forward than the rest, came up to the door, and demanded admission. On my speaking to him out of the window, and inquiring what his business was, he replied, 'We find you have got Mr. ———, the guager, in your house: you must deliver him up to us; we want him.' 'What do you want him for?' 'Oh, Doctor, that's no business for you to meddle in; we want him and must have him.' 'Indeed that I cannot allow; he is under my roof; he has come, claiming my hospitality, and I must and will afford it to him.' 'Doctor there are two words to that bargain: you ought to have consulted us before you promised; but to be plain with you, we really respect you very much; you are a quiet and a good man, and mind your own business; and we would make the man sore and sorry that would touch the hair of your head. But you must give us the guager; to be at a word with you doctor, we must tear open, or tear down your house, or get him.' What was I to do? What could I do?—nothing, I had not a gun or pistol in my house; 'so,' says I, 'boys, you must, it seems, do as you like, and mind I protest against what you are about; but since you must have your own way, as you are Irishmen, I demand fair play at your hands. The man had ten minutes law of you when he came to my house: let him have the same law still; let him not be the worse of the shelter he has taken here; do you, therefore, return to the hill at the rear of the house, and I will let him out at the hall door, and let him have his ten minutes law.' I thought that in those ten minutes, as he was young and healthy, that he would reach the river Lennan, about a quarter of a mile off, in front of the house, and swimming over it, escape. So they all agreed that the proposal was a fair one; at any rate, they promised to abide by it; and the man seeing the necessity of the case, consented to leave the house; I enlarged him at the hall door, the pursuers all true to their pledged honour, stood on a hill about two hundred yards in the rear of the house, a hanging lawn sloped

* See the Second Number.